



# NEWS RELEASE

US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR ■ BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
NEW MEXICO STATE OFFICE ■ 1474 RODEO RD ■ SANTA FE NM 87505

Hans Stuart ■ Public Affairs Chief ■ 505.438.7510

## For Immediate Release

February 12, 2004

## For Additional Information

Bill Murray 505.627.0272

Kitty Mulkey 505.438.7514

## Valley of Fires Opens This Saturday, February 14

Closed since December 1, last year, BLM's Valley of Fires Recreation Area, west of Carrizozo, re-opens Saturday, February 14, ahead of schedule, after significant improvements made to its facilities. Continuing work on some projects will not delay the early opening.

Local contractor Anthony Sanchez of ACS Fencing is still constructing new restrooms and a shower facility but this will pose no problems for visitor safety or interruption of water or electric service. Restrooms are available at the visitor station.

"Once people know we're open again, they'll start coming in droves," said eighty-six year old, life-long Carrizozo resident Johnson Stearns. Stearns has been a BLM volunteer at the site for 6 years.

Other improvements for 2004 include completing an existing nature trail, installing vault toilets and constructing a cold storage building connected to the existing visitor center.

The Valley of Fires Recreation Area, Highway 380 four miles west of Carrizozo, is a popular lava flow recreation site that receives 98,000 visitors a year. The area, which started as a State Park and came under BLM management in 1989, boasts 25 camp/RV sites and numerous trails.

For more information about the Valley of Fires temporary closure, or recreation opportunities at the Valley of Fires, contact the Roswell BLM Field Office at either 505.627.0220 or 505.627.0203, or call the Valley of Fires Recreation Area directly at 505.648.2241.

-BLM-

